

**For immediate release
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DCR TO CLOSE STORROW DRIVE TUNNEL AT NIGHT TO FACILITATE TUNNEL REPAIRS

Overnight closures for several months will hasten completion of repairs

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) plans to close both lanes of the Storrow Drive Tunnel from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. each night beginning Sunday, September 28, and continuing for several months to expedite repairs inside the tunnel.

Engineers from DCR and SPS New England Inc., the agency's contractor, estimate that closing the tunnel each night until repairs are complete could result in the work being finished next spring, at least three months earlier than originally planned.

Earlier this month, DCR closed the tunnel at night for one week, to see whether it would be feasible to use full night-time closure for the duration of the remaining repairs to hasten the end of the work. Nearby residents and commuters were invited to call or send emails with their thoughts. Also, DCR officials held a public meeting at the Boston Public Library on Thursday night, Sept. 25, and received positive feedback on the closure proposal.

"The contractor has told us we can shave several months off this project if we close the tunnel completely every night for construction," said DCR Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr. "The one-week experimental closure appears to have been a success: DCR received only a handful of emails and calls on the matter, and to a person, they were positive."

During nightly closures, SPS will be able to set up staging areas and work on both sides of the tunnel without endangering motorists, vehicles, or the work crews themselves. Work in the tunnel includes cleaning several steel beams, demolishing damaged tile walls, and repairing concrete. These interim repairs, costing about \$11.5 million, are expected to extend the life of the tunnel another five years until a more extensive rehabilitation can be done.

Vehicles approaching the tunnel, which carries eastbound (inbound) traffic only, will be detoured across the Western Avenue and River Street bridges to Memorial Drive in Cambridge. Westbound (outbound) traffic will not be affected. Emergency vehicles will be allowed to travel through the tunnel during the hours it is closed, and accommodations will be made for traffic related to large sporting or cultural events in Boston.

DCR continues to invite neighborhood residents, commuters, and other interested parties to comment on the closure by e-mail to: dcr.updates@state.ma.us.

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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, and dams, in addition to 278 bridges and miles of roadways. Led by Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr., the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.